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Running Injury Prevention Program

Hundreds of thousands of soldiers who run as a part of their unit or individual physical training regimen incur injuries, often due to wearing the wrong type of shoe for their running gait. The Running Injury Prevention Program was initiated to decrease and prevent running related injuries through education in the proper selection of running shoes based on biomechanics, bodyweight and training and an evaluation by a Exercise Physiologist.

The Running Injury Prevention Program is broken down into three segments: the initial interview, the running gait analysis, and the patient running report. During the interview, participants register on the program's secure web site and complete an on-line worksheet prior to their appointment with the health care provider. This worksheet is used to collect information on past injuries and details of the runner's training regimen, such as the frequency, duration, speed and distance of running, strength training and agility/flexibility training sessions. This data, as well as information gained at the actual visit from shoe wear patterns such as; height of the arch and the shape of the foot is entered into a specially designed secure web site database. The actual running gait analysis involves making two digital recordings of the runner's gait on a treadmill; first barefoot and then in running shoes. Both recordings are analyzed to reach a diagnosis of running gait and proper shoe recommendation. Finally, the information and the diagnosis are collated into a web based report for the patient that details the information gained about that person's running style and includes a list of running shoes best suited to that style.

Running gait analysis has been utilized in military health clinics across the country to encourage safe training and injury prevention by providing proper equipment to soldiers. Digital Videotaped Gait-Analysis (DVGA) is the primary technique for running gait analysis.

The Running Injury Prevention Program provides a convenient, reliable, and cost-effective method of extending the benefits of DVGA to service members around the world improving mission readiness by lowering running injuries.

Facilities designing to participate in the program may become either a referring facility or a referring / consulting facility. In order to be a referring / consulting facility, the facility must have an Exercise Physiologist on staff and that person(s) must be trained by the Running Injury Prevention Program Director.

This project is the joint effort of the Walter Reed Army Medical Center's Telemedicine Directorate and the DiLorenzo TRICARE Health Clinic located in the Pentagon and was initially funded by a grant from the Army's Telemedicine and Advanced Technology Research Center located at Fort Detrick, MD.

For more information on this program, please contact the Running Injury Prevention Program Director at (703) 692-8890.